

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Special Meeting – Work Session

Tuesday - May 12, 2009 - 2:00 p.m.

A special meeting – work session of the Knox County Commission was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., at the county courthouse, 62 Union Street, Rockland, Maine. Administrative Assistant Candice Richards was present to record the minutes of the meeting.

Commission members present were: Anne Beebe-Center, Commissioner District #1, Richard L. Parent, Jr., Commissioner District #2, and Roger A. Moody, Commissioner District #3. County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Candice Richards, Finance Director Kathy Robinson, Communications Linwood Lothrop, and IT Director Jeff Lake.

Other people present: Melissa Waterman, reporter from *The Free Press*.

<b>Special Meeting – Work Session – Agenda</b> <b>Tuesday – May 12, 2009 – 2:00 p.m.</b>		
<b>I.</b>	<b>2:00</b>	<b>Meeting Called To Order</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>2:01</b>	<b>Discussion Items</b>
		1. Update on Space Needs
		2. Update on Fiscal Year
		3. Update on Meeting with Municipalities to Discuss Cost Sharing
		4. Update on Meeting with Lincoln County
<b>III.</b>		<b>Adjourn</b>

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

Commission Chair Anne Beebe-Center called the May 12, 2009 special meeting - work session of the Knox County Commission to order at 2:00 p.m. The Commissioners and County Administrator moved to sit at the conference table.

**II. Discussion Items**

1. Update on Space Needs.  
County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that there was not a whole lot of new information since the last work session. There is a Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting scheduled for 9:00 a.m. with Ken Schiano from QA13, Jim Robinson, Roger Lichtman from the Lichtman Associates, and the three department heads (Linwood Lothrop, Ray Sisk, and Sheriff Dennison). The purpose of the meeting is to go over what was initially proposed for square footage numbers. They will look at what is really needed for space and try to determine what is realistic square footage for each department. While the County is mostly only looking at moving two departments (Communications and EMA/EOC) for now, the realistic square footage will still be needed for the Sheriff's Office eventually. QA13/Lichtman Associates is willing to participate in this work session with the County even though it was not spelled out in the contract. Ken Schiano had been asked if QA13 would do this because there was a concern that the County would be billed extra for it later. Mr. Schiano referred the question to Roger Lichtman, who seemed surprised that the County would ask. It is not known if this will be able to be finished in one meeting. QA13 does not mind doing an addendum to their report to reflect the product of the upcoming meeting, but they do not want to change original report based on this meeting because those are their original findings.

Commissioner Rick Parent asked if there were any minimum standards that need to be considered, such as the number of employees doing a certain job, etc.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that this was supposed to be taken into consideration when QA13/Lichtman Associates were doing their report.

Commissioner Rick Parent commented that he had noticed when touring the Lincoln County's facility that it was much smaller than the size recommended by QA13.

It was commented that Lincoln County is looking at getting more space by expanding into the basement area for increased storage capacity. They do not have any other areas to expand into. The space is for EMA and Communications (Lincoln County has one director over the two departments). It is possible that the building may not have been built as big as they wanted because of the parking restraints. There is a garage on the first floor that is too small for the vehicle that was intended to be parked there. It is wasted space. Storage space always seems to

be the issue. A lot of information has to be kept for many years, often in paper form. Some things can be scanned and kept in electronic format, but some is kept in physical form.

There was a discussion about what would become of the current EMA space if the EMA office is relocated. It was suggested that it might be ideal space for the Probate office because they are in need of more space to store files. The basement, however, has had water leaks before, so it might not be a good place to store files. It was also discussed that the courthouse would not be appropriate for Dispatch. Communications needs to be in a secure place, separate from society, and with the ability to do a lockdown in an emergency situation.

The EMA space was not looked at by QA13 for the purpose of considering what other departments could use the space. It was looked at because that is the space where EMA is currently located. The future use of any space that may eventually be vacated by the three departments was not looked at or considered by QA13 because that task was not part of the contract. QA13 was only hired to look at the space needs for those three departments. The KCRCC Executive advisory board needs to be involved in this process. Communications Director Linwood Lothrop has invited the KCRCC Executive board to the meeting with the department heads. The County will need their support if this process is going to be a success. The County will understand better after Tuesday's meeting what QA13 is comfortable with and what the departments needs are. After that, the County can look at what has been offered to the County for buildings and/or property, but most of what has been offered has been leases. The Commission is most likely not interested in leasing because of moving costs, in particular the cost of moving the Communications equipment. There should be some closure on the property offers to the County as a courtesy. The meeting with QA13 will be a working meeting with those attending the meeting. Everyone there will have input. The County needs to understand why QA13 came up with such large numbers for the square space needed by each department, and then see if it can be scaled back. It has been hard to arrange the schedules of all three department heads so that the meeting could take place. The needs assessment is supposed to be projecting out the needs for next fifteen to twenty years.

2. Update on Fiscal Year.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that at last meeting the Commission had discussed doing a six month budget and then a twelve month budget (not simultaneously) in order to change to a fiscal year schedule. It involves putting together a realistic six month budget, not just cutting a twelve-month budget in half. This will not have much of an impact on the department heads other than the initial pulling of it together. The department heads will just have to look at what is critical, not what would be nice to have. The Budget Committee members have been told about the possibility of the change to a fiscal year, but they were mostly just curious about the impact on the towns. The County will have to borrow money for the initial six months. The payments on the TAN may take longer to pay off. There will need to be a talk with bond counsel and the bank to see what some options are. Kennebec County developed a six and twelve month budget. Knox County cannot reinvest the TAN money that is borrowed because that is the way it is written into the TAN. It will result in about \$50,000.00 in interest, which the towns ultimately pay for. The towns can decide to pay it off over five years in equal payments. There will be multiple calculations because the towns will probably select different options. The county administrator and finance director will need to sit down with department heads and have them get started on six-month budgets to see what they can get by with for those six months and what can hold off until the twelve-month budget. If the County is going to make this change, now is the time to do it in order to have it all blend in with the jail budget change-over. It might be too soon to really start putting anything on paper since there are not any concrete numbers yet, but the departments can start thinking about the two budgets and what the needs will be. The administration will also need to touch base with the town managers and clerks about this because they are working on their budgets now. The six-month budget will be for will be January to June 2010, and the twelve-month budget will go from July of 2010 to June of 2011. There may be changes with salaries, health insurance, and some other expenses.

The subject of fiscal year will be brought up at the June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting with the towns, but since it is possible that the towns may not all be represented, the County may need to be proactive to contact the towns. An agenda may be put out prior to the meeting that emphasizes fiscal year change in the hopes that there may be more town representation at the meeting.

3. Update on Meeting with Municipalities to Discuss Cost Sharing.

Both an e-mail and a letter sent via the mail went out to the towns informing them of the meeting scheduled for June 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m., to talk about what services the County could do for the towns, or some possibilities in cost sharing.

Roberta Smith in Camden had responded to the letter by saying that Camden is interested in discussing economic development. South Thomaston had e-mailed back to say that three selectmen will be attending the meeting.

It was discussed that it might be a good idea to make an agenda out of some of the possible discussion topics and send that out to towns as a reminder of the meeting. The format for the meeting still needs to be considered. This should be more of a facilitated discussion to allow everyone there a chance to speak. The timing might be bad because of town budgets but the County has to start somewhere. The meeting will run from 10 a.m. to about noon. Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center volunteered to draft an agenda.

4. Update on Meeting with Lincoln County.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that he had spoken to John O’Connell on a couple of occasions regarding this meeting. Mr. O’Connell asked that the Knox County Commission come up with some dates, but did say that he preferred meeting at 1 or 2 p.m. He also had suggested that the meeting take place in Waldoboro since that is halfway between both counties. Mr. O’Connell will take care of coordinating the meeting place. Administrator Hart will ask him if June 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm will work. June 9<sup>th</sup> will be a backup date since that is also a Commission meeting day. A third backup date will be the 15<sup>th</sup>. Administrator Hart will check with Mr. O’Connell in the morning to see if any dates work and will also email him tonight.

Possible topics to discuss when meeting with Lincoln:

- Economic development
- Sharing of assets
- Waste recycling model
- Looking at how they merged their EMA and Dispatch
- Sharing ambulance services – providing backup
- Strategies to change or keep services with towns
- How Lincoln reads municipal interests, relationships with their towns
- Problems they have had with sharing jail services, closing down part of jail, issues with State jail consolidation, inmate populations

### III. Adjourn

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Roger Moody. A vote was taken with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Candice Richards

**The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their regular meeting  
held on May 12, 2009.**

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Anne H. Beebe-Center, Chair – Commissioner District #1

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Richard L. Parent, Jr. – Commissioner District #2

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Roger A. Moody – Commissioner District #3